

FORESTRY *Leaflets*

North Carolina Division of Forest Resources

BEDDING - A NECESSARY SITE PREPARATION METHOD ON SOME TRACTS

In many areas of eastern North Carolina, tree survival and early growth can be significantly increased by simply developing a raised bed for the new seedlings. These beds are shaped with specialized "bedding plows" that are usually pulled behind crawler tractors.



BEDS

The bedding operation has many advantages. It reduces weed competition, makes the tree planting job easier, improves soil aeration, and places newly planted seedlings above the water table.

Bedding, fertilization and drainage can boost the productivity of poorly drained sites. Super phosphorous fertilizers applied when the beds are formed, or administered as a top dressing will stimulate tree growth on phosphate deficient sites. Precautions are necessary when bedding to protect the soil and minimize environmental impact. Beds should be constructed so as not to block natural drainage courses, and except on very flat surfaces, beds should follow the contour of the land.

Areas to be bedded must be sufficiently free from logging debris, stumps, and other vegetation so a well-shaped bed can be formed. Many beds, particularly those containing significant logging debris, should be allowed to settle and become more compact before being planted. One hard rain is often all that is required.

For more information on bedding, or other site preparation methods and treatments, please contact your local Forest Ranger.

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